

**MINUTES  
AGENCY BUDGET REVIEW  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2001  
8 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair  
Bob Workman, Vice Chair  
Bernie Heier  
Larry Hudkins  
Linda Steinman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer  
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy County Clerk  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

**LIBRARY (020)**

Present were Carol Connor, Library Director; John Dale, Assistant Director; Paul Jones, Lincoln City Libraries; and James Sherwood, Peter Levitov and Darrell Podany, Library Board.

Connor distributed copies of memorandum explaining the \$551,491 funding request for the Library Services contract with Lancaster County for Fiscal Year 2001-02 (Exhibit A). She explained that the most significant increase to the budget is the two new library branches (Eisely Branch Library, North 14<sup>th</sup> & Superior Streets and Bess Dobson Walt Branch Library, South 14<sup>th</sup> Street & Densmore Park Road). She said 26 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees will be added, with hiring phased over the next fiscal year. One FTE will be eliminated from the Building and Grounds Division which will help to offset that cost. Connor noted that the Belmont Branch Library (1234 Judson Street) will be merged with Eisely Branch Library, but said plans are to maintain the Arnold Heights Branch Library (3815 Northwest 54<sup>th</sup> Street). She said it is anticipated that the Walt Branch Library will draw some users from the Gere Branch Library (2400 South 56<sup>th</sup> Street). Increased usage by rural citizens is also anticipated for the Eisely and Walt Branch Libraries. Connor noted that the County will pay a smaller portion of the Library budget than it did previously because the 2000 Census indicated a shift in population.

In response to a question from Workman, Dale said 8-9 items are checked out, per capita, on an annual basis.

Levitov said reference material usage is also high.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Dale said the Bookmobile service is offered in Malcolm and the Summer Reading County Outreach program is offered in one of the town buildings in Raymond.

### **AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY (045)**

Present were Charles Willnerd, Lancaster County Agricultural Society President, and Jim Countryman, Lancaster County Agricultural Society Treasurer.

The following materials were disseminated:

- ▶ *General/Fair Budget Worksheet, Lancaster County Agricultural Society* (Exhibit B)
- ▶ *Event Center Operations Budget Worksheet, Lancaster County Agricultural Society* (Exhibit C)

Willnerd said budget projections were based on actual operating costs for the first six months. He noted there are start-up costs for the Event Center and said concession revenues and the Ag Society's percentage of Lancaster County Fair carnival proceeds will help to gauge its success.

Countryman projected that this will be a break even year for the General/Fair Budget.

Hudkins asked whether the State Fair Board is cooperating in terms of usage of buildings at State Fair Park.

Willnerd said the State Fair Board has notified the Ag Society that it must move out of the 4-H Youth Complex Building. He noted that County Extension and the 4-H clubs have experienced some access problems and said he will be meeting with John Skold, State Fair Board, to discuss this. Willnerd also stated that the Ag Society has not given up its rights to the State Fair Park.

Heier requested an explanation of Miscellaneous Expense (4200) in Exhibit B.

Willnerd explained that most of this reflects transfers and said this will be split out further.

Heier also questioned the amount budgeted for Accounting (4095) in Exhibit B.

Countryman said this is a miscalculation.

Willnerd added that the Ag Society has had to absorb accounting expenses for the Lancaster County Fairgrounds Joint Public Agency (JPA).

Willnerd explained that the Event Center has only had three months of income on which to base the budget and said a deficit of \$220,076 is projected for the period of 12/01/00 through 11/30/01 (Exhibit C).

Steinman asked why Ticket Sales (3969) are projected to drop to \$5,500 (Exhibit C).

Willnerd explained that no ticket events are scheduled for the remainder of the year.

Steinman asked for an explanation of Concessions - Food (3972) and Concessions - Liquor (3973).

Willnerd said these revenues are related to lunches and banquets that will be held in the facility.

Heier asked what impact County tax receipts have on the budget.

Kroeker explained that the Ag Society budgets are limited by the property tax lid and said the maximum lid is being utilized for the fair operations. He said the Ag Society is also part of the 15 cents, per \$100 of value, that is allocated to the Rural Fire Districts, Ag Society, Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) and Public Building Commission (PBC).

Hudkins noted that capital expenditures are considered to be outside of the property tax lid and asked whether the cost of enclosing the Pavilion's steel beams in concrete and an outside marquee would qualify.

Kroeker said land and improvements thereon are considered an exclusion. He said it would still be part of the 15 cents, per \$100 of value, but would not be part of the 2.5 percent lid.

Willnerd noted that the Building and Safety Department required changes to the small animal building that completely wiped out that project's contingency fund and said they can continue to make changes up through the full completion date of the building.

In response to a question from Workman, Willnerd said the Ag Society has held off on the marquee to ensure there are sufficient funds in the Capital Construction Fund to pay any outstanding bills. He said the marquee is considered a priority and will be a revenue generator.

Willnerd said he would also like to point out that some construction costs were absorbed into the budget as it was determined that the labor could be done in-house less expensively. He also noted that other income generating items are being pursued, such as advertising space in the arena.

The Board asked that revised figures be forwarded to Kroeker.

Heier noted that no erosion soil is leaving the Event Center site.

Willnerd said the design of the excavation allowed the silt to be retained on the property. He also reported that 95 percent of the seeding is complete on the drainage ways.

#### **PUBLIC DEFENDER (625)**

Present were Dennis Keefe, Public Defender, and Monica Ross, Office Manager.

Keefe reviewed *The 2000 Annual Report of the Lancaster County Public Defender* (Exhibit D) noting the following:

- ▶ 42% of the budgeted amount is spent on juvenile cases
- ▶ Indigency rate was 77% for felony cases in County Court last year
- ▶ 4% decline in misdemeanor case openings (cases filed by the City Attorney decreased by 12% and cases filed by the County Attorney increased 6%) with a 3% increase in the amount of attorney time devoted to misdemeanor cases
- ▶ 25% increase in misdemeanor case openings over a 3 year period (See Table 2 on Page 39)
- ▶ 2% decline in the total number of filings in Juvenile Court
- ▶ Appointment of Public Defender in abuse/neglect cases increased

Keefe gave an overview of the budget, noting major changes:

- ▶ 52% increase in Photocopying (3302) reflects change from ownership to cost-per-copy program

- ▶ Funds were built into Repair Improvements to Buildings (4102), Office Equipment (4202), Communication Equipment (4212) and Furniture & Fixtures (4216) to allow for expansion into space currently occupied by the Personnel Department

The Board directed that these funds be transferred to the Building Fund.

Hudkins asked whether funds for rent of the additional space was built into Building Use (3604).

Keefe said he will check.

- ▶ 13% increase in Memberships & Dues (3404) due to increases in Nebraska State Bar Association & Nebraska Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) dues

In response to a question from Kroeker, Keefe said LB 335 (changes powers and duties of the Commission on Public Advocacy and provides reimbursement procedures for indigent defense systems) is not anticipated to impact this fiscal year budget.

### **COUNTY COURT & INDIGENT SCREENER (622 & 626)**

Present were Peggy Gentles, Judicial Administrator for Lancaster County Court, and Dennis Keefe, Public Defender.

Gentles gave an overview of the County Court Budget noting major changes:

- ▶ 26% increase in Legal Services (3052) for Public Defender conflict cases
- ▶ 50% increase in Printing (3301) for printing of probation orders
- ▶ 100% increase in Office Equipment (4202) for replacement of a fax machine

In response to a question from Steinman, Gentles indicated that costs for Psychologist/Psychiatrist (3069) are being eliminated from the budget, as there were no obligations this year.

Hudkins asked about the 25% increase in Laundry & Dry Cleaning (3073).

Gentles said this is for routine cleaning of the judges' robes and bailiffs' jackets. She also agreed to check on whether these are considered County property.

Gentles also reviewed the Indigent Screen Budget and distributed copies of a

memorandum explaining that the Personnel Department has classified the part-time assistant to the Indigent Screener higher than was estimated in the budget (Exhibit E), an increase in personnel services from \$43,714 to \$45,423.

Keefe asked about evaluation of the Indigent Screener Program.

Campbell suggested that a letter be sent to Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice John Hendry indicating that the County is looking at evaluation of the pilot program and asking for his input.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Kroeker distributed copies of *Lancaster County Allocation of Levy* (Exhibit F).

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Steinman seconded to send a letter to the rural fire districts indicating that the County Board is anticipating the same rate as last year and asking that the County Board be apprised if significant changes are anticipated. Hudkins, Steinman, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

Gary Lacey, County Attorney; Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk; and R. J. Nuernberger, County Treasurer, appeared and announced that Ray Stevens has been selected to fill the vacancy on the County Board.

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

---

Bruce Medcalf  
Lancaster County Clerk

**NOTE:** Budget documents discussed are included in *Lancaster County Proposed Budget FY2001-02* (on file in the County Clerk's Office).